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The GUARDIAN.

——Res antiquæ Laudis & Artis
Ingredior, Sanctos auſus recludere Fontes. Virg.

Saturday, May 9. 1713.

'TIS probable the firſt Poets were found at the Altar, that they employed their Talents in adorning and animating the Worſhip of their Gods; the Spirit of Poetry and Religion reciprocally warm'd each other, Devotion inſpir'd Poetry, and Poetry exalted Devotion; the moſt Sublime Capacities were put to the moſt noble Uſe; Purity of Will, and Fineneſs of Underſtanding, were not ſuch Strangers as they have been in latter Ages, but were moſt frequently lodg'd in the ſame Breaſt, and went, as it were, Hand in Hand, to the Glory of the World's great Ruler, and the Benefit of Mankind. To reclaim our Modern Poetry, and turn it into its due and Primitive Channel, is an Endeavour altogether worthy a far greater Character than the Guardian of a private Family. Kingdoms might be the better for the Converſion of the Muſes from Senſuality to natural Religion, and Princes on their Thrones might be obliged and protected by its Power.

Were it modeſt, I ſhould profeſs my ſelf a great Admirer of Poeſie, but that Profeſſion is in Effect telling the World, that I have a Heart tender and generous, a Heart that can ſwell with the Joys, or be depreſs'd with the Misfortunes, of others, nay more, even of imaginary Perſons; a Heart large enough to receive the greateſt Ideas Nature can ſuggeſt, and delicate enough to reliſh the moſt Beautiful; it is deſiring Mankind to believe that I am capable of entering into all thoſe ſubtle Graces, and all that divine Elegance, the Enjoyment of which is to be felt only, and not expreſs'd.

All kinds of Poeſie are amiable, but ſacred Poeſie ſhould be our moſt eſpecial Delight. Other Poetry leads us thro' flowery Meadows or beautiful Gardens, refreſhes us with cooling Breezes or delicious Fruits, ſooths us with the Murmur of Waters or the Melody of Birds; or elſe conveys us to the Court or Camp, dazles our Imagination with Crowns and Scepters, embattel'd Hoſts, or Heroes ſhining in burniſh'd Steel; but ſacred Numbers ſeem to admit us into a ſolemn and magnificent Temple, they encircle us with every thing that is Holy and Divine, they ſuperadd an agreeable Awe and Reverence to all thoſe pleaſing Emotions we feel from other Lays; an Awe and Reverence that exalts, while it chaſtiſes; its ſweet Authority reſtrains each undue Liberty of Thought, Word and Action; it makes us think better, and more nobly of our ſelves, from a Conſciouſneſs of the great Preſence we are in, where Saints ſurround us, and Angels are our fellow Worſhippers.

O let me [illegible] glory in [illegible]
Whom ſhould I ſing, but Him [illegible]
This Theme ſhall laſt, when Homer [illegible]
When Arts, [illegible]
And ev'n the [illegible]
Then this high Province [illegible]
Whate'er the [illegible] Advance [illegible]
In [illegible] Eternity [illegible]
I [illegible]
Then [illegible]
In [illegible]
To reach [illegible]
I [illegible]
I [illegible]
I [illegible]
([illegible] the Theme) their [illegible]

But [illegible] from Sacred P[illegible] above [illegible] ginary [illegible] thinks [illegible] with an inviſible Hand [illegible] ments we poſſeſs. We find a Kind of Refuge [illegible] Pleaſure, and [illegible] Why [illegible] the [illegible] Po[illegible] *I will magnify thee, O God my King, and I will praiſe thy Name for ever and ever.*

That greater Pleaſure may be reaped from Sacred Poeſie than from any other, is indiſputable; but is it capable of yielding ſuch exquiſite Delight? Is it a Title only to be [illegible] of the Scholar and the Aged? Is it only to be read on [illegible], and to be bound in Black [illegible] it put [illegible] good Eſteem of the [illegible] Can [illegible] Ri[illegible] or a Theatre [illegible] Pleaſure to thoſe who [illegible] their Palates [illegible] high [illegible] nancy of Human Wit [illegible]

That Poetry gives us the greateſt Pleaſure which affects us moſt, and that affects us moſt, which is on a Subject in which we have the deepeſt Concern; for

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